**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 17, of the specification as follows:

(a) a substrate of an amorphous thermoplastic polymer material having softening and glass transition temperatures ~~as low as~~ greater than about 95 °C; and

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 12, of the specification as follows:

(a) providing a substrate of an amorphous thermoplastic polymer material having softening and glass transition temperatures ~~as low as~~ greater than about 95 °C; and

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 13, line 26, of the specification as follows:

Specifically, the inventors have determined that the ability to form high recording density, high performance (e.g., high coercivity, $H_c$), granular perpendicular magnetic recording layers at nominally room temperatures, as by sputtering of a magnetic alloy target in a reactive atmosphere including at least one of oxygen ($O_2$) gas and nitrogen ($N_2$) gas to form granular perpendicular magnetic recording layers wherein physical de-coupling of adjacent magnetic grains is provided by means of oxides and/or nitrides, can be advantageously utilized with low cost, readily available thermoplastic substrate materials having softening and glass transition temperatures (i.e., ~~as low as~~ greater than about 95 °C), to form lower cost, high coercivity disk media for use in disk-based information storage and retrieval systems.

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 15, line 7, of the specification as follows:

In accordance with embodiments of the present invention, e.g., as with hard disks, non-magnetic substrate **2** is comprised of a readily available, low cost amorphous thermoplastic material having softening and glass transition temperatures ~~as low as~~ greater than about 95 °C, comprised of at least one amorphous thermoplastic polymer material selected from the group consisting of: polycarbonates (PCs), polyolefins (POs), polyetherimides (PEIs), polysulfones

(PSUs), and polyethersulfones (PESs). In addition, substrate **2** may be comprised of homopolymers, copolymers, terpolymers, or blends of at least one of the aforementioned thermoplastic polymers.